



Illinois Office of Health Information Technology

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NEWS RELEASE

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Illinois Receives \$600,000 to Connect Behavioral Health Community to Illinois Health Information Exchange

Chicago, IL – Illinois has received \$600,000 in federal funding to support the Behavioral Health Integration Project (BHIP) whose goal is to promote the exchange of health information among behavioral health and medical care providers to achieve better care. Grant activities will help licensed substance abuse and mental health practitioners to better coordinate patient care with their clients' primary care providers through secure electronic health information exchange. Ensuring appropriate access to relevant patient information, such as current medications and medication history, holds great promise for improving the overall health of patients.

"The award of this grant will accelerate Illinois' progress toward using health information exchange to achieve better health care" said Laura Zaremba Director, Office of Health Information Technology. BHIP will serve as a demonstration project to help establish national best practices in electronic health information exchange in the area of behavioral health.

Zaremba continues "Illinois law has set a higher confidentiality threshold for behavioral health than many other states. This grant challenges Illinois to balance appropriately protecting behavioral health data with the strong need for increased coordination of behavioral health care with medical services; ultimately to improve the quality of care for behavioral health clients."

BHIP will work to develop the legal and operational framework necessary to protect confidentiality while helping to facilitate data exchange. The project will engage the behavioral health provider community and convene legal experts, statewide associations and individual consumers to build this framework and test it in several demonstration sites throughout the state. Illinois' BHIP is a joint effort of the Illinois Office of Health Information Technology, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, with active support and participation from dozens of behavioral health and medical care organizations throughout the state. A list of endorsing organizations is below.

Behavioral health conditions, such as substance abuse or mental health issues, often trigger the onset of chronic ailments such as obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. According to the Service Administration of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (SAMHSA), sixty-eight percent of individuals with a mental health disorder have one or more medical conditions. Of the nearly sixty percent of adults with a medical condition, about one-third have a co-occurring mental disorder. Those with co-occurring mental health disorders experience much poorer health outcomes.

The grant is administered by the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare on behalf of the Center for Integrated Health Services (CIHS), a joint project of the Service Administration of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (SAMHSA) and Health Resources Service Administration (HRSA). Maine, Rhode Island, Kentucky and Oklahoma also received behavioral health grants. These efforts also support Illinois' Care Innovations Program which seeks to coordinate care for Illinois' Medicaid recipients, focusing on improved preventive and follow-up treatments.

Illinois Health Information Exchanges' Behavioral Health Integration Project (BHIP) is a highly participatory and collaborative effort of multiple State and non-profit entities. Below is a list of BHIP endorsing organizations as of press time:

Alliance of Chicago Community Health Services
Ben Gordon Center
Chicago Health IT Regional Extension Center (CHITREC)
Childcare Association of Illinois
Community Behavioral Healthcare Association
Heartland International Health Center (HIHC)
Human Service Center
Illinois Academy of Family Physicians (IAFP)
Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association (IADDA)
Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (IARF)
Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN)
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)
Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)
Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), Division Alcoholism and Substance Abuse
IFMC-IL
Illinois Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center (IL-HITREC)
Illinois Hospital Association (IHA)
Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA)
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Illinois (NAMI)
Mental Health Summit
National Council for Behavioral Healthcare
Northern Illinois University (NIU)
Trilogy Behavioral Healthcare

To get involved or learn more about the Behavioral Health Integration Project, please visit www.hie.illinois.gov

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***About the Illinois Office of Health Information Technology (OHIT)
and the Illinois Health Information Exchange (ILHIE)***

The Illinois Office of Health Information Technology is working with The Illinois Health Information Exchange Authority to promote the development of health information technology, increase the adoption and meaningful use of electronic health records, assure the privacy and security of electronic health information, and direct the implementation of the statewide health information exchange. The main goals of this exciting technology are to improve the quality of health for all Americans while reducing the cost of health care delivery. Illinois is committed to making these important goals a reality.